

HONOLULU STAR-BULLETIN
Saturday
September 29, 1984

Trying Rewald

I was surprised and disappointed by your Sept. 22 editorial in which you conclude that even if all of the allegations regarding CIA involvement with Ronald Rewald are true, "they would not absolve him of responsibility for the crimes of which he is accused."

As Rewald's current attorney, I was under the impression that his trial was yet to take place, not that he had already been convicted.

As both a prosecutor and a defense attorney, I have seen countless juries instructed that a defendant is presumed to be innocent unless and until his guilt is proven beyond a reasonable doubt by evidence in court.

Surely you do not disagree with this fundamental principle that has served our country so well since its founding. Only just recently, in the notorious DeLorean case, a jury of 12 citizens

applied this principle to acquit a defendant whose guilt at first glance appeared obvious to the general public.

In light of the presumption of innocence, I would ask you to reconsider your editorial position. Rather than promote a public attitude of hostility and prejudice which may already have made a fair trial in Hawaii impossible, you could use your immense prestige to encourage the citizenry to have an open mind until all the evidence has been heard in court.

Michael R. Levine
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Editor's note: The editorial did not prejudge Rewald's innocence or guilt. Its point was that the allegations concerning the CIA are a smokescreen intended to divert attention from the charges Rewald faces.